

Patient information: medical retina services

Use of iodine before eye injections

Before your injection treatment (intravitreal injection) is given, we clean the eyelids and surrounding area of your eye with an antiseptic agent called povidone-iodine (PVP-I). Iodine is also used for patients undergoing any type of eye surgery or procedure (see figure 1 below). This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions patients frequently ask us about our use of iodine, however, if there is anything else you would still like clarified, please ask your eye doctor or nurse practitioner.



Figure 1

Why is iodine used before my eye injection?

Using iodine before an intravitreal injection procedure means there is a minimised risk of infection (one in 3,000 cases at Moorfields Eye Hospital).

If I experience sensitivity to iodine does that mean I may be allergic?

All antiseptic agents/drops are known to cause mild to moderate irritation or some redness but that does not mean that you are allergic to them. Very rarely, patients are truly allergic to povidone-iodine. If you have any known allergy to povidone-iodine please tell your eye doctor when you attend the injection clinic appointment.

Why would I experience sensitivity to iodine?

Iodine is in the same group as chlorine (used as an antiseptic in swimming pools) and so it is likely that you will have a similar reaction to the eye irritation you may get from extended swimming.

